

The comprehensive bill will allow for the conservation of rivers and harbors nationwide

For Immediate Release

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(Washington, D.C.) - Congressman Albio Sires voted today for the Water Resources Development Act of 2007, a bill that will allow the Army Corps of Engineers to improve rivers, harbors and wetlands across the country. H.R. 1495 authorizes funding for hundreds of projects that provide for hurricane protection, ecosystem and environmental restoration and flood damage reduction projects.

"The nor'easter that hit New Jersey this week underlines the dire need for flood control and shoreline protection," said Congressman Sires. "Our 13th Congressional District will also benefit from studies that could enhance public access and recreation in three of our major cities."

The Water Resources Development Act authorizes \$13.2 billion for construction or feasibility studies of more than 700 water projects by the Army Corps of Engineers. In New Jersey's 13th Congressional District, the funding would allow the Secretary of the Army to carry out the following projects:

- In Carteret and Bayonne, studies that would determine the feasibility of environmental restoration including improved water quality, enhanced public access, and recreation on the Raritan River and the Kill Van Kull respectively;
- In Perth Amboy, a study to determine the feasibility of riverfront development including enhanced public access, recreation, and environmental restoration on the Arthur Kill;
- In Elizabeth, a study to determine the feasibility of carrying out ecosystem restoration improvements in the Elizabeth River watershed.
- In Jersey City, the continued restoration of 234 acres of Liberty State Park, which will ultimately result in the reintroduction of tidal wetland habitat, protection and enhancement of freshwater wetlands, and the management of allied terrestrial buffer habitats under the guidance of the Army Corp of Engineers.

The Watershed Development Act also requires private contractors to employ local residents to make up no less than 50% of the workforce on the water projects in those areas.

"This bill will not only put our local residents to work, it will begin to contribute to the conservation and restoration of our precarious ecosystem for future generations," said Congressman Sires.